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Security Council

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Letter dated 5 May 2000 from the Permanent Representative of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to refer to my letter dated 31 March 2000 (S/2000/273) and regret to inform you of the resumption on Friday, 5 May 2000, of fighting between troops of the regular armies of Rwanda and Uganda in the Congolese town of Kisangani, which has been under the control of these armies since the beginning of the aggression against my country.

My Government wishes to draw the Council's attention to the fact that these violent clashes are taking place under the same circumstances as those in which the same protagonists clashed in August 1999 in the same town. The clashes that took place last year, in violation of the ceasefire to allow Congolese children to be vaccinated, were over control of the town and its wealth. The resumption of fighting today is not by chance. It is the result of Uganda's determination to regain control over the diamond trade in the region around the town.

My Government is deeply concerned at these clashes which are taking place at this very moment and which have already caused innocent victims among Congolese civilians, including more than 10 deaths and hundreds of injuries.

What is even more serious is the fact that these clashes are taking place while the belligerents observe a ceasefire prior to the deployment of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) and at a time when these two aggressor countries are preparing to receive an important Security Council mission headed by Ambassador Richard Holbrooke.

My Government notes with regret that this repeat of their conduct by Rwanda and Uganda is a logical consequence of the Security Council's refusal to condemn the armed aggression committed by these two countries against the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

My Government therefore once again requests the Security Council, as the principal United Nations body for the maintenance of international peace and security, to assume fully its responsibilities and:

(a) Demand an immediate halt to the fighting by Rwanda and Uganda in the Congolese town of Kisangani and the strict observance of the Lusaka Agreement and other related undertakings;

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(b) Unequivocally condemn the aggression by the armed coalition of Burundi, Rwanda and Uganda to which the Democratic Republic of the Congo has been subjected since 2 August 1998 in order to prevent its recurrence;

(c) Take all measures necessary to put an effective end to the illegal exploitation of the riches of the Democratic Republic of the Congo which motivates this war of aggression and invite these two countries to strictly adhere to the Lusaka Agreement and other related undertakings;

(d) Call for the immediate withdrawal of these armed troops from Congolese national territory.

The Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo asks the Security Council to work tirelessly and to spare no effort so that this horrible situation of war, which is exacerbating the misery of the Congolese people, can be brought to an end as soon as possible.

My Government should be grateful if you would have this letter circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) André **Mwamba Kapanga**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative